

“He had prior convictions, A LOT of them, he had a court date set for Friday, he did not have a job, he was living out of his truck, and he needed a job to afford the truck payment, or he would literally have nothing.” That’s where this story begins, *The Weekly Win* for July 19, 2017.

It’s Not One of Us, It’s All of Us

“Hey Sean. I know a guy that needs help with a place to live and a job. He had both, but he was in a house where the law came in and found guns and this guy is on parole. He was arrested and held long enough to lose his job. He has a lawyer (public defender) and is living in his car. I don’t know him well, he is a friend of a friend. And, I do know that he will work. Is there a way to help him? Or, can you tell me who could?” “Let’s meet at 10:30am on Tuesday (tomorrow) morning. I have another meeting at 11:00am, but thirty minutes will be plenty of time.”

We met the next morning, and he was there well before 10:30am. We sat down and we visited. He was in a tight spot. He had prior convictions, A LOT of them, he had a court date set for Friday, he did not have a job, he was living out of his truck, and he needed a job to afford the truck payment, or he would literally have nothing. If the court date did not go well, he was facing a long sentence. What was my role in this? What was the purpose of our thirty minutes together? Get him to own his past. If we can clear that hurdle, others can help. I can show him the path, I can tell him where to go and who can help. But, they can’t help if he won’t own it. Our time together was meaningful, we had a really good conversation, and I sent him down the path.

From there, he went directly to the Missouri Job Center, and they were extremely helpful. They do everything. They help with resumes, they help with career readiness, they help with identifying programs for on the job training, they identify programs that can help with getting food and living arrangements, they help individuals job search, they take time with people, they care, and they are awesome! Here’s how the rest of the week played out.

“Hey, it’s Sean. I dropped by the Missouri Job Center office just a few moments ago. They were working with another job seeker, so my visit was quick and brief. She told me her experience with _____ went well, she thinks that she has a program that can help him. Definitely encourage _____ to keep working with her and do whatever she told him to do.” “Will do, and thanks for letting me know.”

“Hello Sean. It’s me again. _____ went to court today and his case was dismissed.”

“My friend just texted me and _____ got a job. I’m not sure of the details, but I think it is a permanent job. I will let you know when I find out more.”

“The place where _____ went to work is _____. It is a permanent job and they are starting him at \$12.00/hr.”

A situation that was desperate and seemingly hopeless. He was staring at a court date, he was looking at a long jail or prison sentence, and he had no job. And then, a pivot. A friend takes time to arrange a meeting, we have the meeting, he begins working with the Missouri Job Center, and because he could show the judge that he was actively working to better himself, the judge dismissed the case, the

Missouri Job Center identifies a potential job for him, he calls the potential employer, he interviews for the job, he gets hired for the job at a pay level that is a livable wage. Let's recap, from the possibility of a long jail or prison sentence to the potential of earning \$25K a year, and all of this happened in a period of six days. It's almost unbelievable. But, I know it happened, because I lived the experience.

All of that being said, this gentleman, he isn't my win for the week. I'm proud of him, SUPER proud of him, and I pray for his continued success.

Rather, it's the people that helped him, it's the people that cared, they are my win for the week. A few weeks ago, I gave an interview about the program, and I stressed the same point in the interview that I'm going to emphasize now. Why is this working? How is this working? It's working because we've created the culture to make it work. It's not one of us, it's all of us. And, if it's not all of us, none of this works.

It's the friends and family members that are reaching out and setting up the meetings. It is giving hope and encouragement to the individuals that need to make a change. It is getting them to take ownership. It is letting them know, "Who you were, who you are, and who you become are literally three different people in one life time if you choose it to be that way." It's the Missouri Job Center, and the wonderful team of people that they have. It's the law enforcement within the community and region, they are actively participating every step of the way and fully supportive of the effort. And, it's the employers who are willing to give these individuals a chance. Everyone is involved, everyone is contributing, everyone is learning, and we continue to improve every single day. That's the power of it, when the culture is created, success begets further success. It's by no means perfect, but it is working, and we are seeing incredible results. And, that's my win for the week!